

The old plow

The photo of an old derelict plow which appeared in the Times Colonist, January 22, 2001, reminded me of a similar agricultural implement my father owned and used on his farm, in Alberta, from 1907 until 1940.

Getting back to the photo, the long straight arm was used to set the depth, at which the plow shares would turn over the soil, usually about eight inches. It was pulled by a team of four horses.

One bright summer day, in 1920, I was at nine years of age the designated teamster. Everything was going pretty smoothly when the plow hit a buried solid rock. The plow went up in the air and over.

To make plowing easier for us, my father attached a binder seat approximately in the centre of the frame for us to sit on and guide the horses. As a safety precaution, we strapped ourselves in with a leather belt at the waist.

As I was extricating myself from the over-turned plow, a stranger going by on the adjacent public road, who had seen the event, came running over to see if I was o.k. I was able to stand up and brush some of the dirt off my overalls, and finished the day without incident.

This true story was written by I.C. Shank, Salt Spring Island, B.C. February, 2001.